

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection and rejections set forth in the above-mentioned Official Action in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks are respectfully requested.

Specification

The specification has been amended to place it in better form by more closely conforming such to the amended claims. It is respectfully submitted that no new matter has been added.

Claims Status

Claims 1, 2, 4 through 6, and 8 through 11 remain pending in the application. Claims 3 and 7 have been canceled. Claims 1, 5, 6, 9, and 10 have been amended to even more succinctly define the invention and/or to improve their form and/or change their dependency. It is respectfully submitted that no new matter has been added. Claims 1, 5, 6, and 11 are the only independent claims pending in the application.

Allowable Subject Matter

It is acknowledged with appreciation that Claim 11 has been allowed. It is also acknowledged with appreciation that Claims 3, 5, and 7 are merely objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claims and any intervening claims.

In response, the allowable subject matter of Claims 3 and 7 has been added to Claims 1 and 6, respectively, and Claims 3 and 7 have been canceled. Claim 5 has been

rewritten in independent form to include the subject matter of Claim 1 previously on file.

It is respectfully submitted that the objection has been overcome.

Art Rejections

Claims 1, 2, 6, 9, and 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,332,066 (Yanagawa).

Claims 4 and 8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yanagawa in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,336,026 (Heeks, et al.).

The rationale underlying the foregoing rejections is succinctly set forth in the Official Action.

Response to Rejections

Without conceding the propriety of the rejection and solely to expedite prosecution, the claims have been amended to either cancel rejected claims or to include allowable subject matter as above-noted. Accordingly, the rejections are moot and further comment thereon is not necessary.

Dependent Claims

Claims 2, 4, and 8 through 10 depend either directly or indirectly from one of Claims 1 and 6 and are allowable by virtue of their dependency and in their own right for further defining Applicants' invention. Individual consideration of the dependent claims is respectfully requested.

Closing Comments

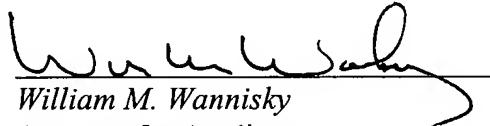
It is respectfully submitted that all of the pending claims are allowable over the art of record and that the application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application are earnestly solicited.

This Amendment could not have been presented earlier in the prosecution, inasmuch as it was earnestly believed that the claims heretofore on file were in condition for allowance. No new claims have been presented. It is believed that the Examiner's familiarity with the present application will allow full consideration hereof without the expenditure of undue time and effort.

Favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application are earnestly solicited.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our New York office at the address shown below.

Respectfully submitted,


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